

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-8 and 11-16, 18-22, and 24-26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 15 is amended and claims 17 and 23 are canceled.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the Advisory Action. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

Claims 15, 16, 19-22, 25 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,641,267 to Ohishi et al.; and claims 18 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Ohishi et al. in view of U.S. 2004/0125343 to Hara et al.

The Examiner indicates that claim 17 includes allowable subject matter. Claim 15 is amended to include the features of claim 17. Accordingly, all claims are now in condition for allowance.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Kevin M. McKinley
Registration No. 43,794

JAO:KMM/jfb

Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

Date: April 25, 2005

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
--